(c) whether they have also urged that they need a quick transparent system for refund of sales tax, extension of deemed exports benefits to sector such as coal, mining, coal bed methane;

(d) if so, whether Government have considered these views; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) Exports can act as the motive power of growth for a rapidly developing Indian economy and in making India a significant player in the world market. For this, in the speech on the occasion ofjthe announcement of the Exim Policy on 31st March, 2003, it has been mentioned that exports have to be recognized as a national priority by all the agencies of Government of India, State Government and private sector.

(b) to (e) The Exim Policy aims to achieve 1% share of global merchandise trade by the year 2007 with minimum annual growth rate of 12% in dollar terms. In finalizing the Exim Policy every year, the suggestion of various trade bodies, export promotion councils etc., are taken into consideration. This is done keeping in view all relevant factors including revenue implications.

Export to Iraq and other Arabian countries

3098. DR M.N. DAS:
DR.T SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that exports worth Rs. 1000 crore are held up;

(b) if so, whether exports of sugar and wheat to Iraq and other Arabian countries which were contracted have suffered due to war;

(c) if so, the steps Government have taken to mec. stion in export and import front;

(d) the total loss occurred, and

(e) the number of contracts India have signed with Iraq through UN regarding oil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) Exports from India to Arabian countries as well as under the 'Oil for Food' Programme to Iraq have been affected due to the war in Iraq. The Office of the Iraq Programme under the

United Nations, has issued a Notice to suppliers under the 'Oil for Food' programme that companies holding contracts for only those goods which appear under a list of possible priority contracts, covering sectors such as Food, Health, Water Sanitation, Education, Agriculture and Electricity supplies, would be contacted by the concerned UN agencies. As per information available, so far 23 contracts given to Indian companies have been placed on the list of possible priority contracts. This list includes goods such as wheat, full cream powder, educational materials, medicines etc. Shipments of goods to other Arabian countries have been mainly affected due to dislocation of shipping, increase in freight, insurance charge etc.

(c) to (e) An additional list of 22 Indian companies representing approved contracts already shipped under the Oil for Food programme to Iraq, was sent by the Permanent Mission of India, New York, to the Office of the Iraq Programme for approval to be included in the list of possible priority contracts. These include goods such as wheat, sugar, etc. In addition, the Government is closely monitoring the situation by interaction with the apex industrial organisations as well as the Office of the Iraq Programme for further developments in this regard.

DRI investigation in the marine export sector

3099. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the marine export sector required DRI investigation and declaration under DEPB Scheme;

(b) whether the sector faces any threat due to the unscientific method of DRI investigation and whether Government have received any complaint relating to the harassment met out on investigation;

(c) whether Government are of the view that the method of investigation requires review as the DEPB Scheme is not actual user specified unlike the advance licence scheme;

(d) the reasons for Government propose to insisting on declaration under DEPB Scheme to the marine sector when the other export sectors are exempted;and

(e) whether Government propose to look into the unfairness, if any, in the present scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) to (e) As per information furnished by Ministry of Finance and Company Affairs, Department of Revenue, the Directorate General of Revenue Intelligence had started investigations against export offish and fish products in Jan., 2002 on